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To: jason_funes@ios.doi.gov; Williams, Timothy; downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov
Subject: FW: Letter to Editor submission
Date: Friday, September 01, 2017 12:40:54 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.jpg](#)

All – FYI, please see the attached Letter to the Editor submitted to the Washington Post today.

Have a great weekend!

-EL

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Publication1



From: Ed Frank
Sent: Friday, September 1, 2017 12:20 PM
To: fredhiatt@washpost.com; ruthmarcus@washpost.com; joann.armao@washpost.com
Cc: Ethan Lane <elane@beef.org>
Subject: Letter to Editor submission

Fred, Ruth, and Jo-Ann –

I hope you're all doing well. Attached below is a Letter to the Editor from Ethan Lane, Executive Director of the Public Lands Council and NCBA Federal Lands. If you have any questions or need additional info, please just let me know.

Thanks for your consideration,
-Ed Frank

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To the Editor:

On August 27th, the Washington Post Editorial Board posted an editorial "[Trump's plan to put fragile national monuments in danger](#)," preemptively opposing Interior Secretary Zinke's recommendations to the White House regarding national monuments created through the Antiquities Act. The article dismissed the Secretary's interpretation of the law as "narrow" and lacking the proper "awe" for the natural wonders of the West and incorrectly claimed that the local community supports the designation.

This flawed argument echoes countless environmental activists and officials from previous administrations over the past week, including former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. Their position assigns procedural formality and careful evaluation to a presidential power that requires neither. It is exactly that lack of review or analysis, be it through consultation of the legislative branch or simply an assessment of impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), that is so offensive to the Western communities most impacted by the creation of large-scale national monuments.

San Juan County, Utah, where Bears Ears is located, is 72 percent federally owned. That means federal approval through an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement under NEPA, is required before any activity of real consequence can occur in three quarters of the county. These processes can take years and cost anywhere from tens of thousands to millions of dollars to complete. Given that reality, it is understandable why the local community – yes, even the local tribes whose land actually touches the current boundaries – would oppose the creation of a national monument the size of Delaware in their backyard without any such requirements.

Over the years I have read as the Post [advocated for local control](#), and [demanded less "federal intervention" in local affairs](#) here in D.C. while simultaneously espousing the virtues of such federal action in the West, providing us a technicolor example of the "NIMBY" (Not In My Back Yard) principle in action. Perhaps the tourists that crowd the National Mall each summer should have a voice in the routing of the Purple Line just as the Washington Post editorial board wishes to weigh in on the affairs of Blanding, Utah.

In closing their piece, the Post's Editorial Board writes: "*Some of those pushing to reopen these lands see them as just another place to graze or mine. They are wrong. These places are unique.*"

On the last point the Post is correct; these places are unique. To those that live and work in the West these beautiful vistas are home, livelihood, and community all in one - not just a far-off conquest or fodder to burnish a president's "environmental legacy." If the Post's editorial board wishes to remain consistent, I would recommend they bear that in mind.

Sincerely,

Ethan Lane
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